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The Middle Fork *of the* Salmon

A WILD AND SCENIC RIVER



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Intermountain Region
Ogden, Utah

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



National Agricultural Library

MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River originates 20 miles northwest of Stanley, Idaho, with the merging of Bear Valley and Marsh Creeks. It traverses portions of the Challis, Payette, and Salmon National Forests as it flows 106 miles northeast through one of the deepest gorges in North America before joining the Main Salmon River. The Middle Fork was one of the original eight rivers in the Nation designated as Wild and Scenic on October 2, 1968. In July 1980, the President of the United States established the "Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness" which encompasses the Wild and Scenic River in its entirety.

It passes through a landscape of rugged peaks and deep valleys. Near its junction with the Main Salmon River are the Bighorn Crags, one of the most rugged and wild mountain ranges in the nation. Only a few trails, landing strips, private ranches and Forest Service stations are evidence of man's presence. It is this combination of rugged scenic beauty, quiet isolation, and the challenge of wild water that draws people to float the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

A number of Forest Service trails extend out on either side of the river, offering interesting side trips. A map and a compass are recommended for cross-country travel. A map of the surrounding Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness is available from Forest Service offices listed on the following page.

FRANK CHURCH – RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS

The 2.3 million-acre Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness – through which the river runs – includes parts of the Bitterroot, Boise, Challis, Nezperce, Payette, and Salmon National Forests. Like other Wilderness areas throughout the National Forest System, the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness has been set aside to preserve and perpetuate natural conditions. To maintain this atmosphere, motorized equipment or transportation is not allowed, except by airplane or helicopter to established landing strips.



Dagger Falls

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Due to the increasing popularity of white water floating, and to protect the wild and scenic qualities, it is necessary to limit use on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. This is accomplished by requiring permits for each party floating the river. During the heavy use floating season (May 28 - September 3) permits are allocated using a lottery system. Between September 3 and May 27, permits may be obtained on a first come, first serve basis. Permits are required on a year around basis. Application blanks and other information can be obtained from the Middle Fork District Ranger (see address below).

INFORMATION SOURCES

Further information regarding obtaining a trip permit, party size, sanitation requirements, and other conditions of use may be obtained by contacting the Middle Fork District Ranger, Challis National Forest in Challis, Idaho 83226, phone (208) 879-4101.

For additional information on adjoining Ranger Districts relative to trails, Wilderness access, and Wilderness maps, contact:

*Middle Fork Ranger District
Challis, Idaho 83226
Phone: (208) 879-4101

Payette National Forest
Forest Service Building
McCall, Idaho 83638
Phone: (208) 634-0700

Salmon-Challis National Forests
Forest Service Building
Salmon, Idaho 83467
Phone: (208) 756-5100

Sawtooth National Recreation Area
Stanley Zone Office
Stanley, Idaho 83278
Phone: (208) 744-3000

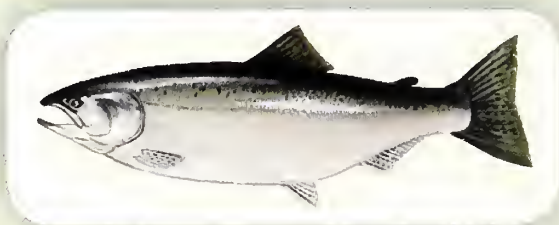
North Fork Ranger District
North Fork, Idaho 83466
Phone: (208) 865-2700

*River floating permits obtained here.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, Idaho 83707, can provide you with hunting and fishing information. Also, check bookstores in Idaho and western Montana for river guide books and other publications that may be helpful to you.

REDD ALERT

The Chinook salmon is an endangered and federally protected species. Salmon return from the Pacific Ocean to spawn and die in rivers within this National Forest. Your actions anywhere along a stream can impact the larger river system and any fish within it. All National Forest visitors share responsibility for maintaining and protecting this country's natural resources.



WAYS YOU CAN HELP

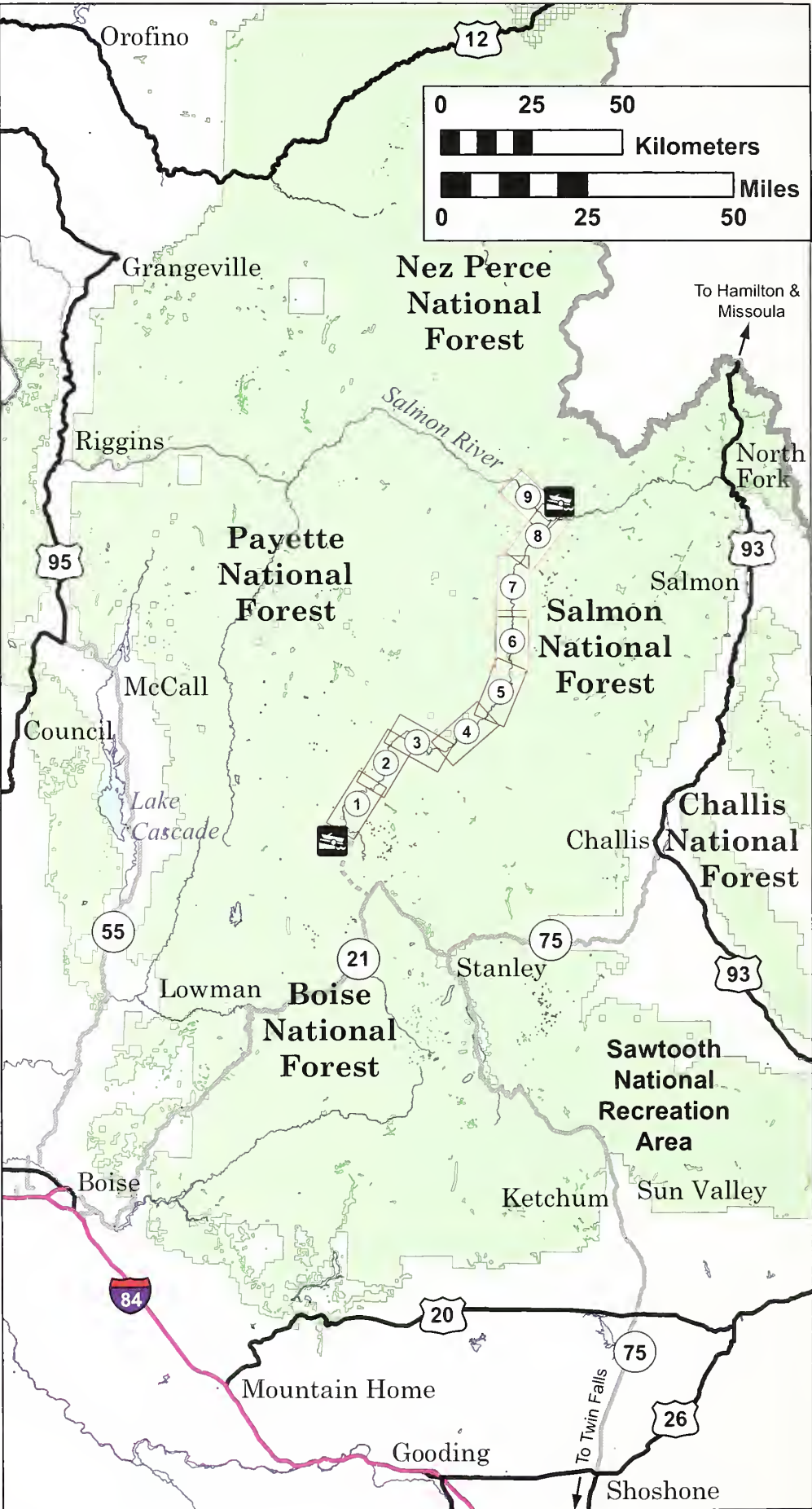
- Keep streams free of soap, oil, and litter.
- Keep campsites 100 feet from the water's edge.
- Respect closed areas.
- Avoid gravel beds – clean, undisturbed gravel beds are potential salmon nests (redds) and essential to salmon survival.



STATE MAP

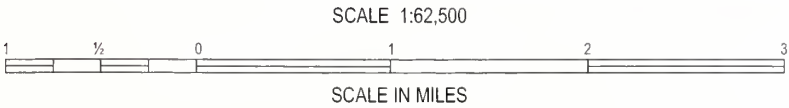


ACCESS MAP



LEGEND

SALMON RIVER



- National Forest Boundary
- Wild and Scenic River
- FCRONR Wilderness
- Forest
- Private
- State
- Other Forest Service Facility
- Campsites / Capacity
 - Over 20 Persons
 - 11-20 Persons
 - 10 or Less Persons
- Forest Service Picnic Site
- Boat Ramp
- Boat Ramp (Unimproved)
- Trailhead
- Scout Location
- Mileage (from Boundary Creek)
- Bridge
- Buildings
- Mine
- Springs
- Rapids
- Class II
- Class III
- Class IV
- U.S. Highway
- Paved Road
- Improved Gravel Road
- Dirt Road
- Unimproved Dirt Road
- Trail

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0.0 BOUNDARY CREEK CAMP AND LAUNCH

AREA: A large campground is located about 60 feet above the river. Permits and camping schedules are issued here by the Forest Service on the day for which reservations are held.

0.1 FIRST BEND RAPID (Class II):

As the river bends right and out of sight of the launch area, it divides in a Class II drop.

0.7 MURPH'S HOLE:

An impressive hole forms here at flows above 6 feet.

0.8 TEEPEE HOLE CAMP (Left Bank):

This is a small, but heavily used site popular with fishermen who hike down from Boundary. Capacity 0-10.

1.6 CABLE HOLE CAMP (Left Bank):

Just above the Morgan Ranch airstrip is a small camp located on a rocky bench with some cleared areas. Capacity 0-20.

2.0 MORGAN RANCH AIRSTRIP (Left Bank - Private):

The airstrip is set back from the river and generally unseen.

2.4 GARDELL'S HOLE CAMP (River Bank):

This large camp is on a sand and gravel bar at the top of a large pool. Sulphur Slide Rapid begins below the pool as the river bends left. Capacity 0-20.

2.45 SULPHUR SLIDE RAPID (Class III to III+):

This is a steep, fairly long rock garden, with critical maneuvering at the top. At moderate to high water, enter center and work left. At low water it's wise to scout.

3.2 RAMSHORN RAPID:

Short steep Class III.

4.5 HELL'S HALF MILE (Class III):

A busy stretch of Class III maneuvering.

5.1 VELVET FALLS (Class IV):

You won't be able to hear the falls coming up because of the Class II water above it. Look for a very large boulder (about 10 feet high, 10 feet wide, and 20 feet long) at the water's edge on the left bank, and Velvet Creek entering the river on the right. The falls are about 20 feet below these two features. You should scout the drop. Scouting at flows above 4 feet require stopping 1/4 mile upstream (at the calmer water below Hell's Half Mile).

5.5 BOY SCOUT CAMP (Right Bank):

This is a rocky area. Sand accumulation varies from year to year. Capacity 0-10.

6.5 BIG BEND CAMP (Right Bank):

This is a large, spacious campsite on a low bench and sand bar with both timber and open areas. Capacity 0-30.

6.9 TRAIL FLAT CAMP (Left Bank):

This camp is on a high rocky bench. A fine hot springs is located at the river's edge. Capacity 0-30.

8.0 THE CHUTES (Class III to III+):

A long, difficult to scout rock garden that becomes more difficult at low flows.

8.2 ELKHORN BAR CAMP (Right Bank):

Look for a large rock in the center of the river just above the camp. Capacity 0-30.

9.3 SADDLE CAMP (Left Bank):

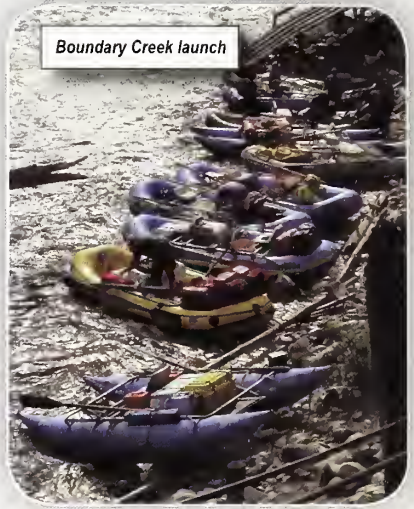
The site is named for the large grassy saddle on the ridge above the timbered flat where the camp is located. Capacity 0-30.

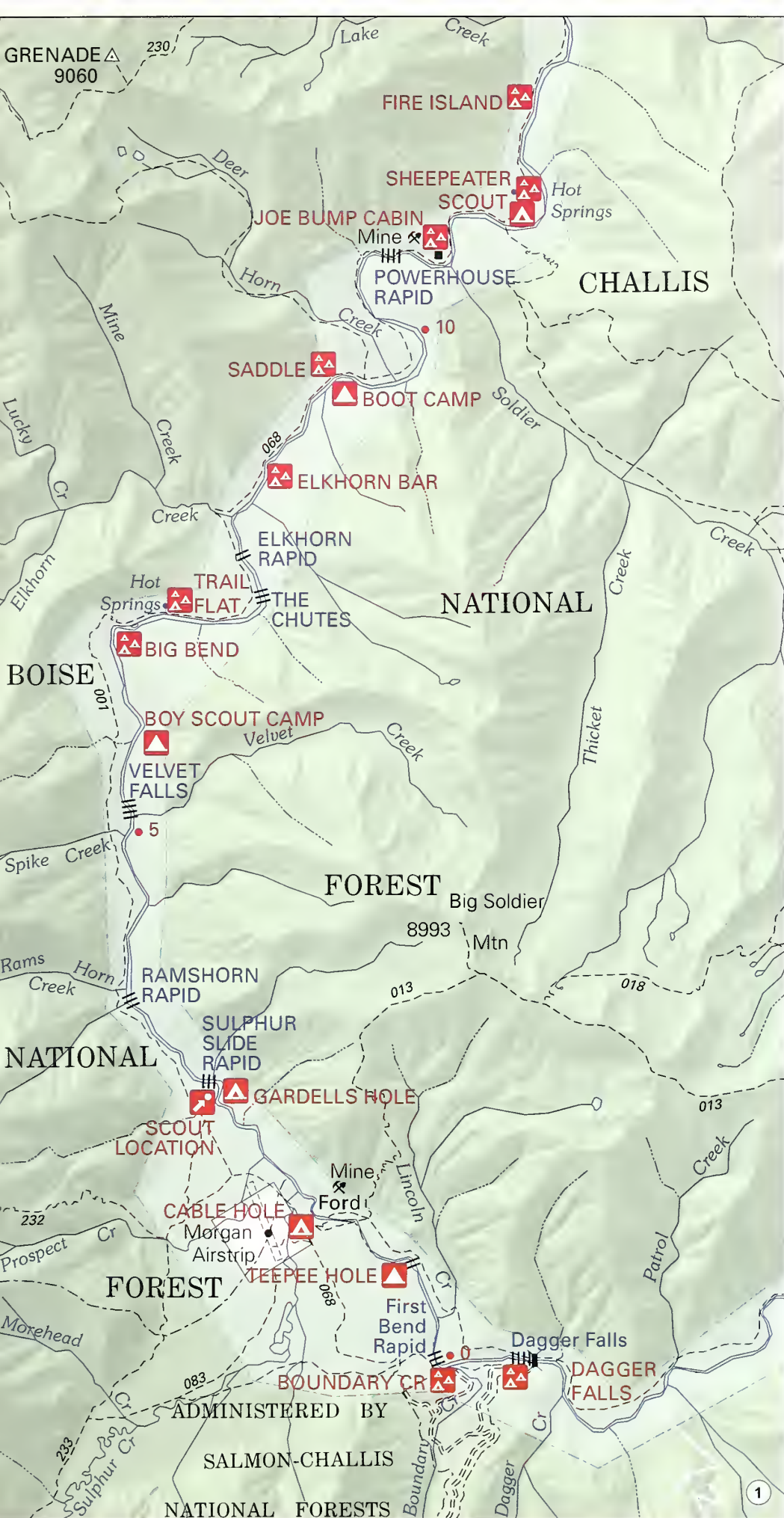
9.5 BOOT CAMP (Right Bank):

This very small site is located just around the corner from Saddle Camp on a high, timbered bench. Capacity 0-10.

11.2 POWERHOUSE RAPIDS (Class III to IV):

You can land just above the rapids on the right side to scout. The rapids are in three sections.

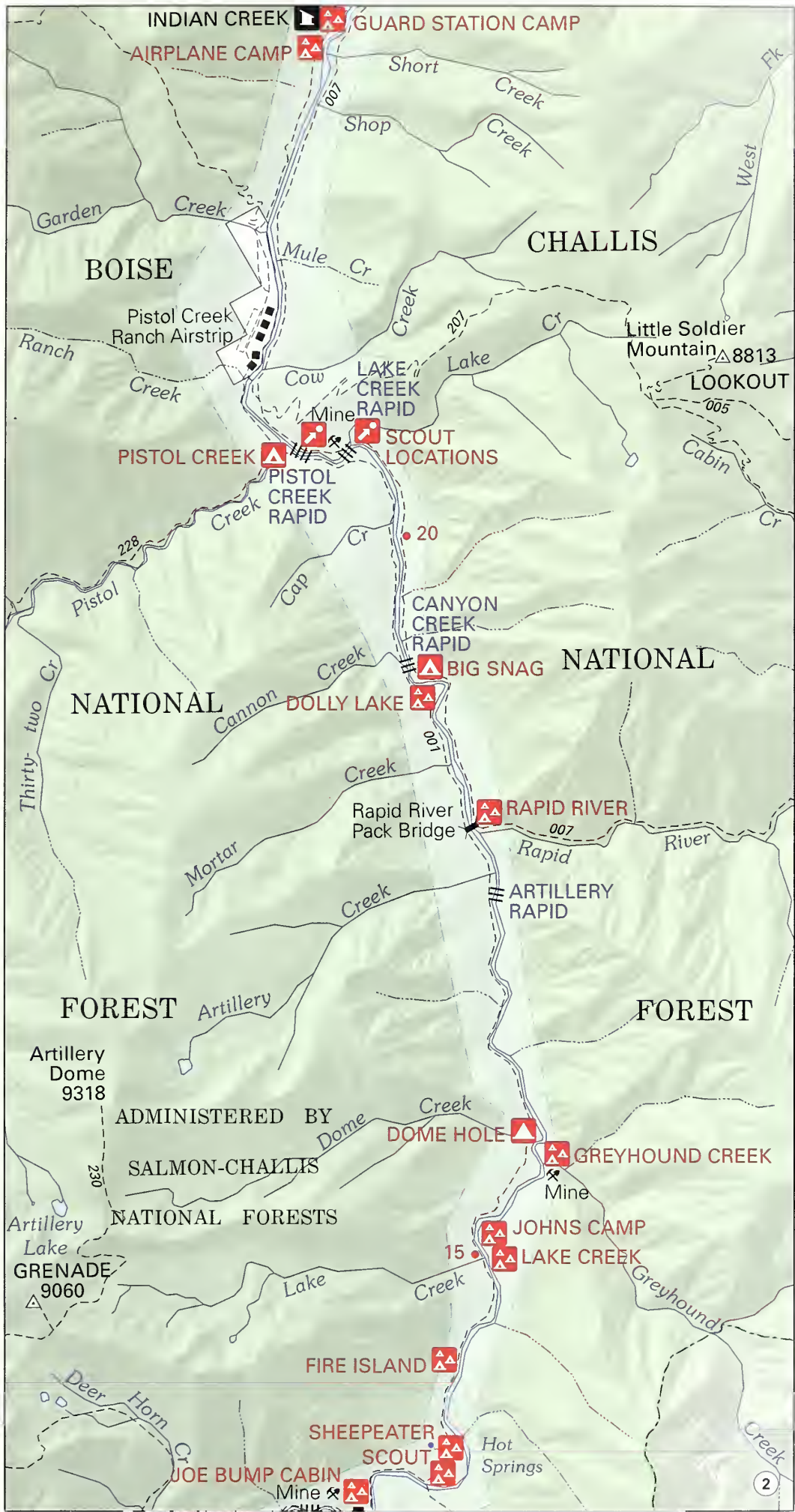




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- 11.8 JOE BUMP CABIN** (Left Bank): The campsite is across the river from the mouth of Soldier Creek. The cabin is 200 yards upstream of the camp. Capacity 0-30.
- 12.7 SCOUT CAMP** (Left Bank): This camp occupies the upstream end of the bar and bench from the Sheepeater Hot Springs and camp. Scout Camp is located in the timbered section of the bar. There are sandy clearings among the trees. Capacity 0-30.
- 13.0 SHEEPEATER HOT SPRINGS - CAMP** (Left Bank): Landing can be a problem at low water because the river is so wide and shallow here. The hot springs are on the high terrace behind the camp. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 13.8 FIRE ISLAND** (Left Bank): There is space for a large party on the low timber and grass bench opposite the rock outcrop in the river. Capacity 0-30.
- 14.9 LAKE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp is across the river from the mouth of Lake Creek. A small hot springs appears below 2.2. Capacity 0-30.
- 15.2 JOHN'S CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp occupies a large bench (scattered timber) where the river bends sharply to the right. Capacity 0-30.
- 15.6 OAKIE POINT CAMP** (Left Bank): The camp was formerly called Lake Creek Camp. The landing is marked by a large, easily visible stump on the inside of the bend. Look for it well ahead, since the current is swift and landing can be difficult.
- 15.9 GREYHOUND CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): This campsite is by a pool. The camp is on the bench about 10 feet above the river and back in the trees. Capacity 0-30.
- 16.0 DOME HOLE CAMP** (Left Bank): This small camp lies just around the bend and past the pool from Greyhound Creek. Capacity 0-10.
- 17.7 ARTILLERY RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-): This is a long but relatively easy rapid, with no definite beginning or end.
- 17.8 ARTILLERY CREEK** (Left Bank): A reference point; you are now beyond Artillery Rapids.
- 18.2 RAPID RIVER CAMP** (Right Bank): The site is just below the mouth of Rapid River, on a high bench with scattered timber. Capacity 0-30.
- 19.0 DOLLY LAKE CAMP** (Right Bank): This large camp is located just below the Big Snag Camp and pool, on a right hand bend. Capacity 0-30.
- 19.1 BIG SNAG CAMP** (Left Bank): The campsite is on a big, calm pool, just before the river swings abruptly to the left. Capacity 0-30.
- 19.3 CANNON CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-): Bedrock ledge forms a large hole.
- 21.4 PISTOL CREEK RAPID** (Class III+ to IV-): This tight S turn should be scouted.
- 21.4 PISTOL CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): The campsite is just below the rapids and upstream of Pistol Creek on a sandbar and low bench. Capacity 0-20.
- 24.2 AIRPLANE CAMP** (Left Bank): This is a large timbered and open site about one and a half miles below Pistol Creek Ranch. Capacity 0-30.



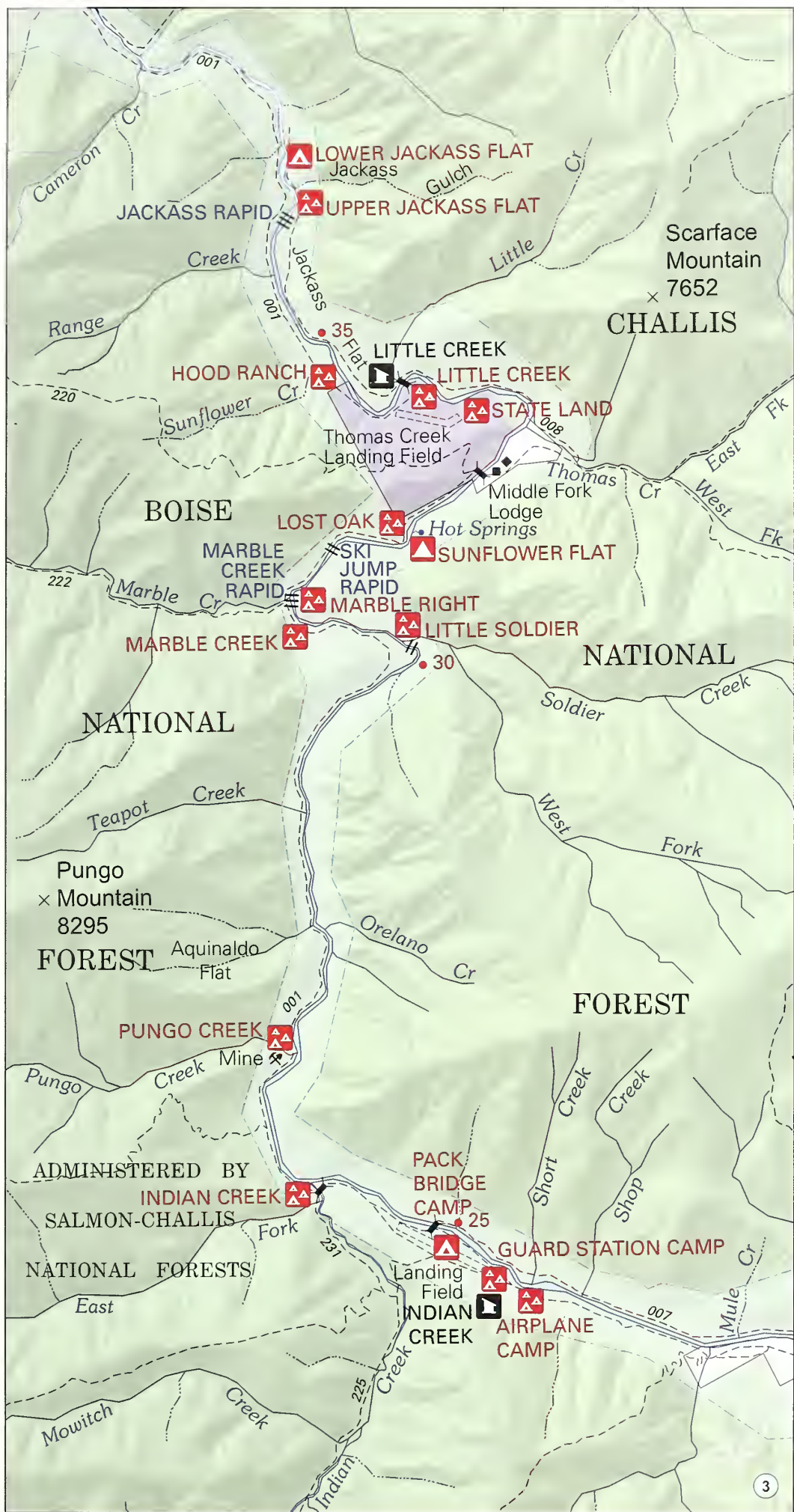


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- 24.7 GUARD STATION CAMP** (Left Bank): Camping is possible along the river at a variety of spots from the boat ramp to the bridge. The area by the river at the boat ramp is the primary staging area at low water, with equipment and passengers flown in. Capacity 0-30.
- 25.1 INDIAN CREEK PACK BRIDGE**
- 26.2 INDIAN CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): This large site is on the upstream side at the mouth of Indian Creek. Capacity 0-30.
- 27.4 PUNGO CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): Landing is easy at this large heavily used camp, located just below the mouth of Pungo Creek. Sensitive archaeological site – please observe camping restrictions designed to protect pithouse features. Capacity 0-30.
- 30.8 LITTLE SOLDIER CAMP** (Right Bank): Landing is on a small beach just below the creek, after an unnamed rapid on a left bend. There is plenty of space among the timber on the higher benches. Capacity 0-30.
- 31.6 MARBLE CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): The campsite is on the very large low bench along a long and quiet pool. Capacity 0-30.
- 31.7 MARBLE CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-): The river bends sharply right as you enter this drop below the camp.
- 31.7 MARBLE RIGHT CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp occupies a grassy and timbered bench on the inside of the bend just below the rapids, and across from Marble Creek. Landing is easy. Capacity 0-30.
- 32.1 SKI JUMP RAPID** (Class II to III-): A short, steep drop into a pool. Becomes a serious hole at very high flows (above 7 feet).
- 32.6 SUNFLOWER FLAT CAMP AND HOT SPRING** (Right Bank): It is a nice, small campsite with a magnificent hot springs that cascades to the river's edge. Many stop here for this natural shower. Capacity 0-10.
- 32.6+ LOST OAK CAMP** (Left Bank): Located across the river from Sunflower Flat, Lost Oak is a large camp on a high timbered bench. Capacity 0-30.
- 33.3 MIDDLE FORK LODGE** (Right Bank - Private): The gaging station, from which the Forest Service and the River Forecast Service in Portland get their data on the Middle Fork, is located here.
- 34.6 STATELAND CAMP** (Right Bank): The site is 3/4 mile below the big bend to the right following Middle Fork Lodge. It is on a spacious low bench with scattered ponderosa pine. Capacity 0-30.
- 35.8 LITTLE CREEK CAMP:** Capacity 0-30.
- 35.9 HOOD RANCH** (Left Bank): This large campsite is signaled by the old cabin, which can be seen easily from the river. There is a hot springs on the bench bank from the river. A low gravel bar divides the river. To land here, take the left hand (narrow) channel, if there is enough water; if it is too low, go around right and pull in below the bar. Capacity 0-30.
- 37.2 JACKASS RAPIDS** (Class III-): This is a short but abrupt drop over a ledge or boulder where the river jogs sharp right.
- 37.3 UPPER JACKASS FLAT CAMP** (Right Bank): Access is easy to this large sandbar. Capacity 0-30.
- 37.6 LOWER JACKASS FLAT CAMP** (Right Bank): Similar to the upper camp, but with less sand and more timber; this is a low bench rather than a sandbar. Sensitive archaeological site – please observe camping restrictions designed to protect pithouse features. Capacity 0-20.



Ridge over Marble Creek

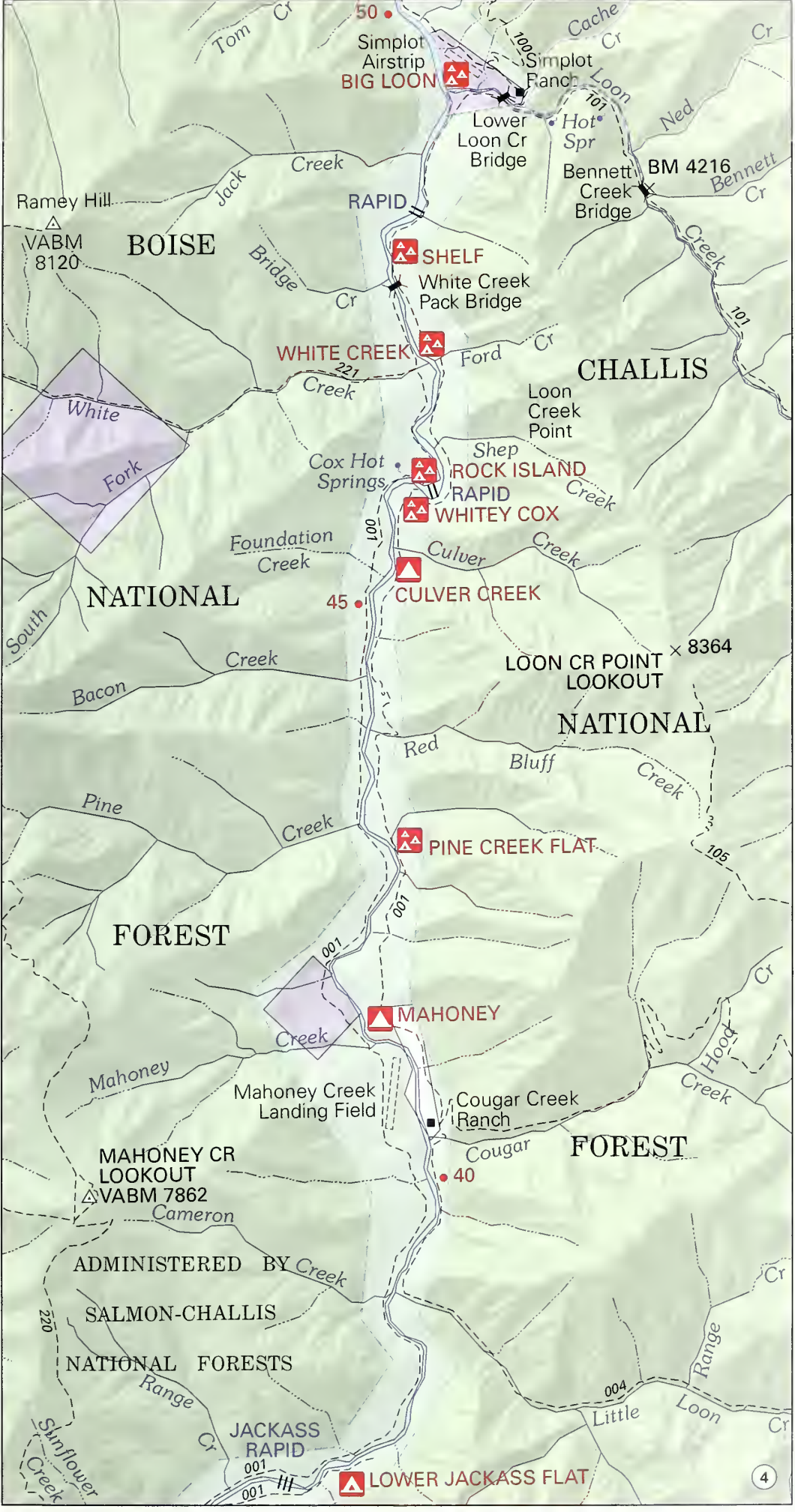


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- 40.4 COUGAR CREEK RANCH** (Right Bank - Private): This is an outfitter camp near the mouth of Cougar Creek.
- 40.8 MAHONEY CREEK LANDING FIELD** (Left Bank): The airfield is on a very high sagebrush bench.
- 41.6 MAHONEY CAMP** (Right Bank): This is a small beach camp, adjacent to a large pool, across and down stream from the mouth of Mahoney Creek. Capacity 0-10.
- 43.2 PINE CREEK FLAT CAMP** (Right Bank): The flat is a large, sage-covered bench with some timber, at the end of a large deep pool where the channel narrows between rock outcroppings. Capacity 0-30.
- 44.5 RED BLUFF CREEK** (Right Bank - Landmark)
- 45.6 CULVER CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): This small camp is just downstream from Foundation Creek (on the left bank) and just above Culver Creek. The rocky outcrop upstream on the left signals the location. Capacity 0-10.
- 46.2 WHITIE COX CAMP** (Right Bank): Upstream of the camp you can spot a hot springs on the left, then the river bends sharply to the right and is fairly calm. The camp is located just around this bend where the sand and gravel bar is dominated by a single large ponderosa pine. The springs are located on the second bench above the camp, and above the bench that holds the tadpole-laden pond and the grave of Whitie Cox. Cox was a miner who perished in a rockfall while prospecting in the vicinity in 1954. Capacity 0-30.
- 46.3 ISLAND AND RIFFLE** (Class II): Immediately below Whitie Cox Camp the river bends to the left. Take the center or right channel, and if headed for Rock Island Camp, start pulling to the left to land.
- 46.3+ ROCK ISLAND CAMP** (Left Bank): There is a large campsite on a low bench, with both timber and clear, flat ground. The landing is just below a large rock, so you must anticipate and move quickly. Sensitive archaeological site – please observe camping restrictions designed to protect pithouse features. Capacity 0-30.
- 47.3 WHITE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp is located just below White Creek (which enters on the left bank), just as the White Creek pack bridge comes into view downstream. Sensitive archaeological site – please observe camping restrictions designed to protect pithouse features. Capacity 0-30.
- 47.7 WHITE CREEK PACK BRIDGE**
- 48.1 SHELF CAMP** (Right Bank): Access is easy to this site, located at the beginning of the right hand bend below the pack bridge. Capacity 0-30.
- 49.3 BIG LOON CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp occupies a large, practically shadeless bar at the mouth of Loon Creek. There is an excellent hot springs one mile up Loon Creek. The killing of some miners further upstream precipitated the Sheepeater Indian War of 1878. PLEASE RESPECT THE PRIVATE LAND BEYOND THE FENCE. Capacity 0-30.

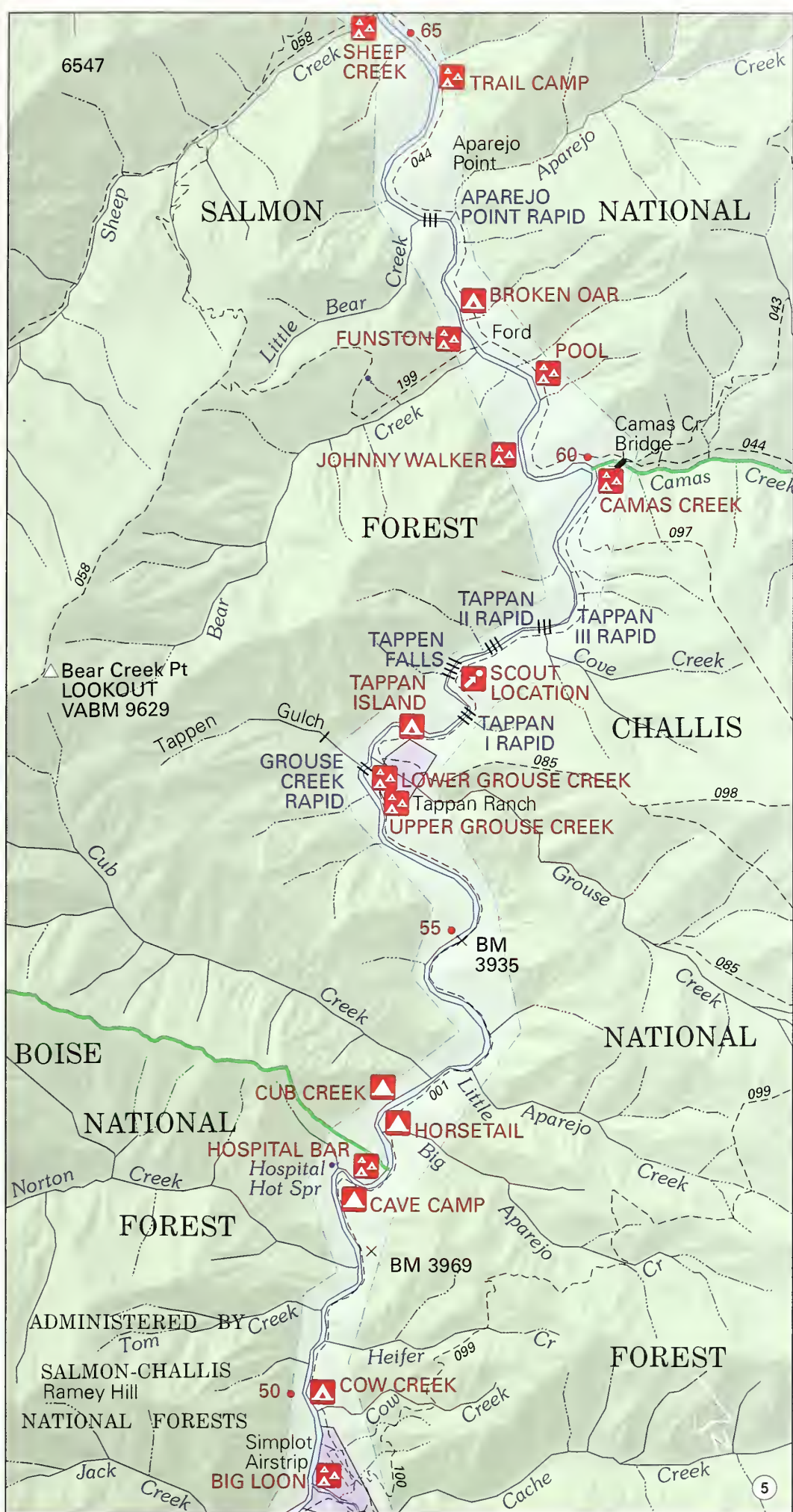


Whitie Cox grave site



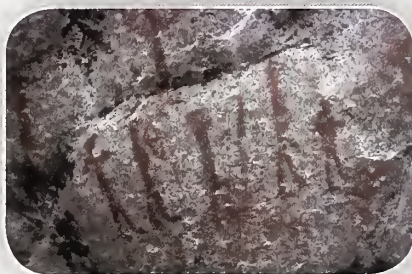
- 49.9 **COW CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): This camp is on a small tree and brush covered bar with a rocky shore. Sensitive archaeological site – please observe camping restrictions designed to protect pithouse features. Capacity 0-20.
- 51.8 **CAVE CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp is on the sharp right hand bend above Hospital Bar; it is on the right just as a cove on the left bank comes into view. Capacity 0-10.
- 52.1 **HOSPITAL BAR** (Left Bank): The camp occupies a large low bench with plenty of flat ground. Tall ponderosas cover the bench near the river. This is the last hot springs camp on the Middle Fork. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 52.7 **HORSETAIL CAMP** (Right Bank): This small camp, located on a high timbered bench with limited clearings, is easily accessible. Capacity 0-10.
- 53.5 **CUB CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): The campsite is located above the mouth of Cub Creek. Capacity 0-10.
- 56.4 **UPPER GROUSE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): A camp on the upstream end of a large bench formerly a pasture. The camp is sandy, on a large pool with easy landing. Capacity 0-30.
- 56.5 **LOWER GROUSE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): The landing is in the middle of Grouse Creek Rapid. Head for the large beach on the right, after the river makes the right hand bend, and before it swings left. Capacity 0-30.
- 56.6 **TAPPAN RANCH CABIN** (Right Bank): Landmark on the bench, easily seen from the river.
- 57.0 **TAPPAN ISLAND CAMP** (Center): No missing the low, open island, as the river swings right. The current is swift, and landing is difficult; take the right channel. Capacity 0-20.
- 57.5 **TAPPAN I** (Class II+ to III-): This is the first of the Tappan Rapids. It is a quick drop, with a large hole forming below the submerged portion of a rock outcrop on the right bank.
- 57.9 **TAPPAN FALLS** (Class III+ to IV-): These falls should be scouted. The river swings sharply right, then enters a long calm pool, with the location of the falls at the downstream end of the pool; easily recognized. You can land to scout from either bank.
- 58.2 **TAPPAN II** (Class III): This drop is marked by a large boulder in center stream and a shelf, exposed at low flows and forming a hole at higher flows.
- 58.4 **TAPPAN III** (Class III-): Short, steep drop.
- 59.9 **CAMAS CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): The campsite is on the upstream side of Camas Creek, a large stream entering from an immense side canyon. There is additional camping space on the sagebrush flat above the main camp. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 60.6 **JOHNNIE WALKER CAMP** (Left Bank): This large camp is located on a low, well-timbered bench, backed by a steep rock wall. Capacity 0-30.
- 61.1 **POOL CAMP** (Right Bank): This camp is on a bench of sagebrush and scattered trees next to a large, quiet pool. Capacity 0-30.
- 61.6 **FUNSTON CAMP** (Left Bank): Located just downstream from Big Bear Creek, this site is a sandy beach on the river. The adjacent sagebrush and timber bench offers more space. Capacity 0-30.
- 61.9 **BROKEN OAR CAMP** (Right Bank): A small camp on a sandy, sagebrush flat, with some ponderosas. Landing is easy. Capacity 0-20.
- 62.8 **APAREJO POINT RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-): This is a fairly easy run, just after the river makes a bend to the left.
- 64.5 **TRAIL CAMP** (Right Bank): This large, popular camp is located on a low, timbered bench. Capacity 0-30.
- 65.3 **SHEEP CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): This is a large camp on the upstream side of the mouth of Sheep Creek. There are large, open spaces with tree cover near the creek bank. Capacity 0-30.





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- 65.9 MORMON RANCH** (Right Bank - Landmark)
- 66.8 FLYING B CAMP** (Right Bank): This small camp is at the water's edge just upstream from the Bernard Bridge. Capacity 0-10.
- 66.8 BERNARD BRIDGE** (Landmark)
- 67.7 FLYING B AIRPORT CAMP** (Right Bank): Camp on stretch of bank across from the airstrip. Capacity 0-20.
- 68.1 HAYSTACK / BERNARD RAPID** (Class III): This dynamic rapid has changed several times recently due to debris flows from Pole and Bernard Creeks. Scout from either bank.
- 68.2 BERNARD GUARD STATION** (Left Bank): The building can be seen on the bench above the river. The Bernard Creek Landing Field extends downstream. (Bernard was the army commander during the Sheepeater Indian War of 1878.)
- 68.7 BERNARD CAMP** (Left Bank): This site is located at lower end of Bernard Creek airstrip. Capacity 0-30.
- 68.9 SHORT CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): Just below Bernard Camp on the opposite side of the river. This is a sage flat bordered by a rocky shore. Access is easy. Capacity 0-30.
- 70.7 JACK CREEK RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-): A series of constricted drops over a half mile.
- 71.4 LITTLE PINE CAMP** (Left Bank): This is a large camp below the right hand bend after Jack Creek Rapids. The site is on a grassy bench with scattered trees and brush. Capacity 0-30.
- 72.1 DRIFTWOOD FLAT CAMP** (Right Bank): This camp has tree cover at the back of the beach, some large rocks, and a good view of the cliff on the opposite bank. The site is littered with large logs. Capacity 0-30.
- 72.9 WILSON CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): The camp is above the mouth of Wilson Creek and is easily seen and accessible. The site is sandy with scattered brush and one large ponderosa pine tree. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-20.
- 73.0 GRASSY FLAT CAMP I** (Left Bank): Camp is located on the large open bench downstream from Wilson Creek. Landing is easy. Capacity 0-30.
- 73.1 GRASSY FLAT CAMP II** (Left Bank): The next bench down from Grassy I. A smaller bench with more trees. Capacity 0-30.
- 74.0 SAMMY GULCH** (Left Bank - Landmark)
- 74.4 RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND CAVE** (Right Bank): This was once a popular campsite, but camping and fires are now prohibited because of past abuse. The shallow cave contains Indian pictographs.
- 74.8 SURVEY CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): A low bench with a cobble beach upstream and small sand beach downstream, located just above the riffle where the river bends slightly left. There is good timber cover. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 74.9 WOOLARD CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): This popular camp is on a large grassy bench just slightly downstream and across from Survey Creek Camp. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 75.7 FLY CAMP** (Right Bank): Located just below a small rapid, this small sandy beach has some large rocks and short trees for cover. Kimmel Creek waterfall on the opposite bank identifies the location. Capacity 0-10.

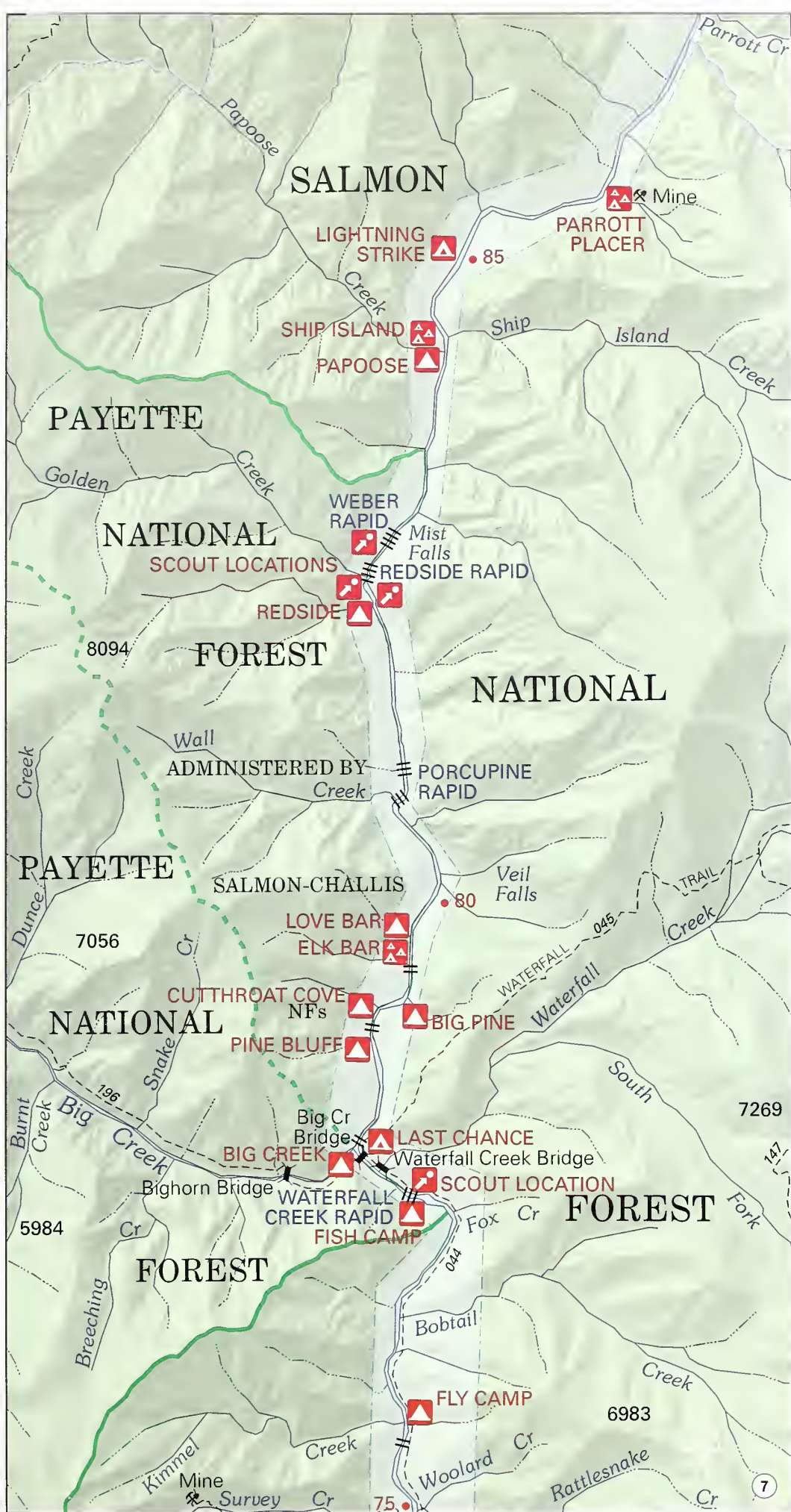




- 76.4 BOBTAIL CREEK** (Right Bank - Landmark)
- 77.4 FISH CAMP** (Left Bank): This very small and rocky camp is at the upstream end of a rock bar, bordered by thick brush and timber. Capacity 0-10.
- 77.6 WATERFALL CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-): A fairly steep drop that becomes more difficult at low flows.
- 77.8 WATERFALL CREEK AND FALLS** (Right Bank): The Big Creek Bridge is visible just downstream as you pass this cascade which tumbles several hundred feet to the river.
- 77.9 BIG CREEK PACK BRIDGE AND BIG CREEK CAMP** (Left Bank): This small, brushy camp is located just upstream from the mouth of Big Creek and below the bridge. Capacity 0-2.

CAMPING LIMITED TO ONE CAMPSITE, ONE NIGHTS STAY BELOW BIG CREEK.

- 77.9 BIG CREEK RAPID** (Class II+): The rapid begins immediately below the mouth of Big Creek.
- 78.0 LAST CHANCE CAMP** (Right Bank): The campsite is on a high, narrow bench with sand, grass and boulders. Camp has good hiking access to Big Creek and Waterfall Creek Trail. Capacity 0-20.
- 78.7 PINE BLUFF CAMP** (Left Bank): This small sandy camp on a timbered site, is located just above a small rapid. Capacity 0-10.
- 78.9 CUTTHROAT COVE CAMP** (Left Bank): Below the small rapids and next to a quiet pool, this is a small sandbar backed by rock and brush. Capacity 0-10.
- 79.2 BIG PINE CAMP** (Right Bank): The river bends sharply left just below a large pool where the camp is located. A rock wall faces the camp from the opposite bank. The site is a sandbar, grading into timber. Capacity 0-10.
- 79.6 ELK BAR CAMP** (Left Bank): This is a large sandbar on a pool just below a small rapid. A sheer cliff is immediately behind the bar. The upstream end of the site is rocky, grading into a high bench. Capacity 0-30.
- 79.7 LOVE BAR CAMP** (Left Bank): A small sandbar camp below the riffle downstream from Elk Bar. Capacity 0-10.
- 80.7 VEIL FALLS** (Right Bank - Landmark): Falls on a high cliff above the river. It is spectacular in spring, diminishing in size later in the season.
- 81.0 PORCUPINE RAPIDS** (CLASS III-): A short and straightforward rapid on the sharp right bend below Veil Falls.
- 82.5 REDSIDE CAMP** (Left Bank): This small camp is upstream from Redside Rapids, at the mouth of a small stream. The site is on a high bench with scattered timber. Capacity 0-10.
- 82.7 REDSIDE RAPIDS** (Class II- to IV-): Like Weber Rapids just downstream, this is a difficult run which should not be taken lightly. The rapids are a short, steep drop among huge boulders. It can be scouted from either bank.
- 83.0 WEBER RAPIDS** (Class III+ to IV-): Another steep drop. Scout from left bank.
- 83.2 MIST FALLS** (Right Bank - Landmark)
- 84.4 PAPOOSE CAMP** (Left Bank): Situated at the mouth of Papoose Creek, this is a very small camp. Capacity 0-6.
- 84.5 SHIP ISLAND CAMP** (Left Bank): A large camp, situated on the bench across from Ship Island Creek, which enters the river on the right bank. The shore is rocky through here and tree-lined. The bench is long, narrow, and flat. Fast landing. Capacity 0-30.
- 85.0 LIGHTNING STRIKE CAMP** (Left Bank): This small beach camp is about half way down the long straight stretch following Ship Island Camp. It takes its name from a lightning burned stump. Capacity 0-20.
- 86.2 PARROTT PLACER CAMP** (Right Bank): Landing is easy at this large sandy beach surrounded by brush and trees. The beach is just after the river bends left with a riffle. Earl Parrott worked this stretch of river, looking for gold during the early part of the century. Capacity 0-30.



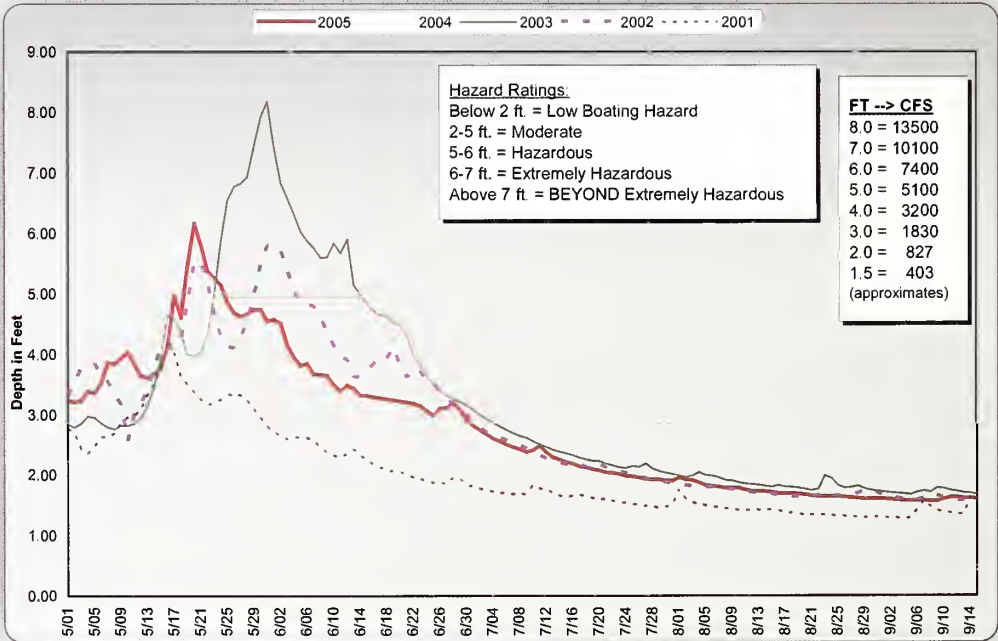
- 87.9 PARROTT CABIN CAMP** (Left Bank): The cabin is just below the mouth of Nugget Creek, at the end of a long, straight stretch. There is a beautiful veil falls in the grotto above camp. The camp area is small. Capacity 0-10.
- 88.6 UPPER CLIFFSIDE RAPIDS** (Class III): The river swings right and swings along a sheer cliff.
- 88.6 CRADLE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): After running the rapids, pull out of the main current into an eddy on the inside of the bend, and land on the beach. The camp is on the bench by the large boulder, with some tree cover. Capacity 0-20.
- 88.7 LOWER CLIFFSIDE RAPIDS** (Class III): This is a continuation of Upper Cliffsides, around the bend from the big eddy noted above. A rock garden, it develops fearsome holes on the right at high flows.
- 88.8 TUMBLE CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): Just past the second part of Cliffsides Rapids, this campsite is on a high grassy bench at the mouth of Tumble Creek. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 89.6 OUZEL CAMP** (Left Bank): Very small sandy beach, but with rocks at low water only. Landing is easy. Capacity 0-10.
- 89.7 CLIFFSIDE CAMP** (Right Bank): The river swings right and against a cliff, with a small riffle. The camp, dominated by a large pine, is on the sand and gravel bar on the inside of the bend. Easy landing. Capacity 0-20.
- 89.8 OUZEL RAPIDS** (Class II+): This is an easy rock garden, but a fairly long one. It begins at Cliffsides Camp, where some care should be taken to avoid the cliff on the left, and continues past Stoddard Creek almost as far as Otter Bar.
- 90.0 STODDARD CAMP** (Left Bank): Located just below the mouth of Stoddard Creek, this is a large high sagebrush bench with small trees and shrubs. The camp will accommodate a large party, but landing is difficult. Sensitive archaeological site – please avoid camping on or adjacent to the pithouse depressions. Capacity 0-30.
- 90.4 OTTER BAR CAMP** (Right Bank): This long beach and sandbar is the last large camp on the river.
- 91.1 RUBBER RAPIDS** (Class IV-): A steep drop with powerful hydraulics and big waves at moderate to high flows. Scout left.
- 92.2 HANCOCK RAPIDS** (Class IV-): This is longer than Rubber Rapids; it begins at the mouth of Roaring Creek as a Class II+ rock garden leading to the main drop at the bottom.
- 92.7 SOLITUDE CAMP** (Left Bank): A small camp on a sandbar hidden behind some willows. Capacity 0-10.
- 93.4 DEVIL'S TOOTH RAPID** (Class III-): Large boulders punctuate this drop. The first in a series extending over the next mile. Run this one to the right of center.
- 94.0 HOUSE ROCKS RAPIDS** (Class IV to III-): Another drop with huge boulders, requiring some maneuvering. At lower flows, there is an easy center route through the boulders at the top. The rapids are more difficult at higher water, when a hard left is required.
- 94.5 JUMP-OFF RAPIDS** (Class III-): This short steep drop becomes technical below 2 feet.
- 94.9 GOAT CREEK RAPID** (Class II+): A rock garden with many small choppy waves, these rapids are on the last major bend as the river enters the fairly straight reach leading to the confluence with the main stem.
- 94.9 GOAT CREEK CAMP** (Right Bank): A very small camp among the rocks just below the Goat Creek Rapids; it is used primarily as a last day lunch stop. Capacity 0-10.
- 96.3 CONFLUENCE OF THE MIDDLE FORK AND MAIN STEM OF THE SALMON:** The river flows west from here to Riggins as the "River of No Return." There has been a launch and pull-out spot on the right bank for years, but the new take-out is at Cache Bar, downstream. If you have a through trip, stop at Corn Creek for trip permit on down Main Salmon.

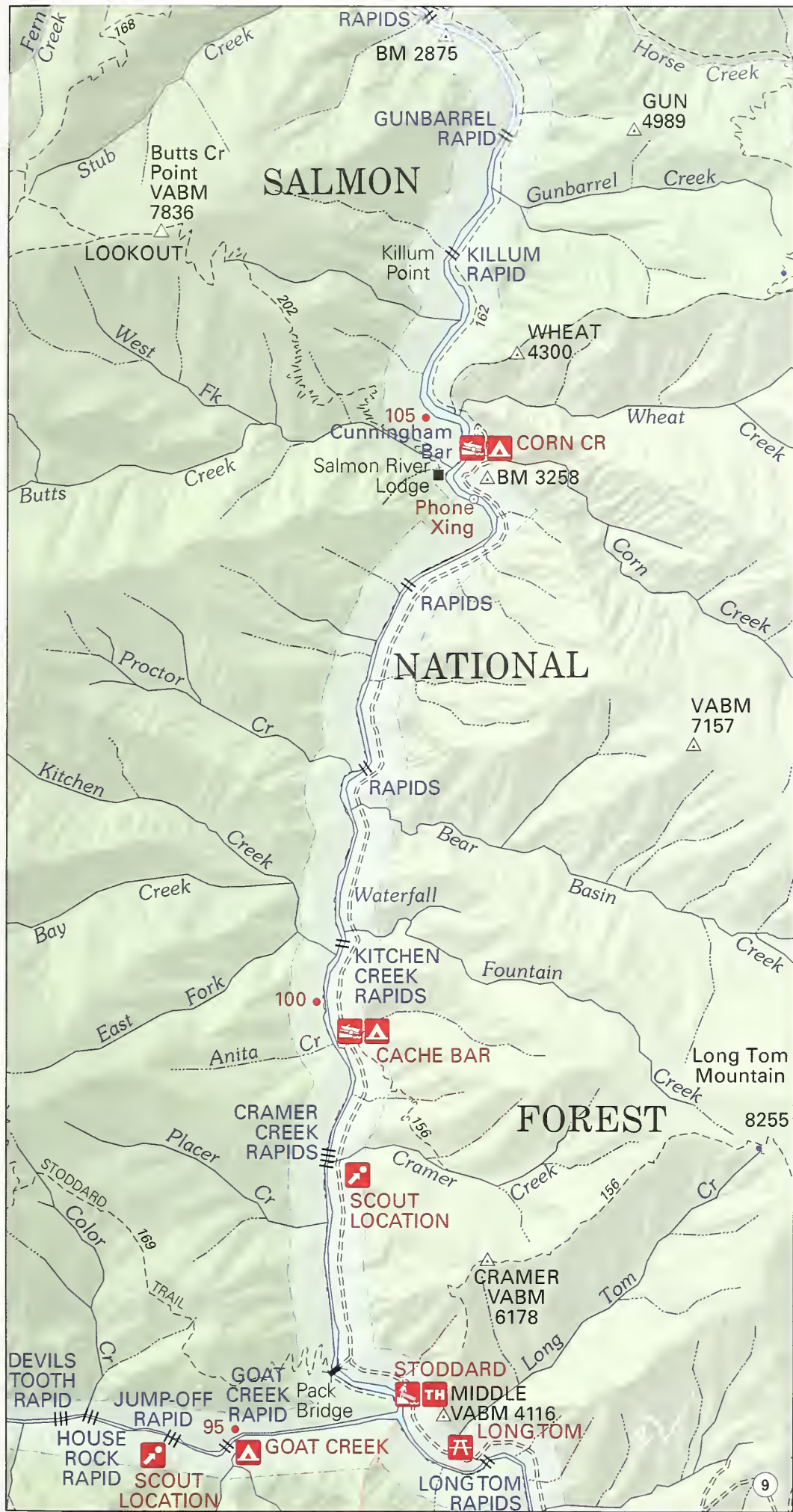
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- 96.9 **STODDARD PACK BRIDGE:** Access to the Wilderness is via the Stoddard Trail which crosses the river at this point, and then climbs to the top of the ridge.
- 97.9 **PLACER CREEK (Left Bank):** Placer Creek enters the river from the left.
- 99.0 **CRAMER CREEK RAPIDS (Class IV):** A 2003 debris flow created a steep challenging drop. Scouting recommended.
- 99.7 **CACHE BAR:** This is the take-out point for Middle Fork trips. Please be patient, as the boat ramp is often very congested.



HUMAN WASTE AND REGULAR GARBAGE SITE IS LOCATED 40 MILES UPRIVER FROM THE MOUTH OF THE MIDDLE FORK AT NEWLAND RANCH FACILITY





HISTORY

In the early 1800's, explorers and trappers found Shoshone Indians living in the Salmon River Mountains. Bone chips, tools, and mussel shells found in rock shelters along the rugged canyon walls confirm that primitive man once lived here over 8,000 years ago.

Rich historically and of interest geographically, the Middle Fork of the Salmon River was the setting for one of Idaho's past sagas – the Sheepstealer Campaign of 1879.

Sheepstealer Indians – a sub-group of the Northern Shoshone – depended upon mountain sheep for food. The Sheepstealers were accused of ambushing four men in Long Valley and massacring five Chinese at Oro Grande.

In the spring of 1879, troops at Fort Boise, commanded by Captain Rueben F. Bernard, set out to subdue the Indians. Bernard and his men ventured out into this vast domain marked on maps as “unexplored.” Crossing the mountains, they descended into the Middle Fork via Loon Creek. Bernard commented in his diary that “...within a distance of 10 miles, we have come from 10 feet of snow to roses and rattlesnakes.”

Bernard's forces had their first battle with the “Sheepstealers” at Vinegar Hill, west of the Middle Fork near Big Creek. Surrounded by Indians, his soldiers ran out of water and were compelled to drink vinegar.

Some weeks later, two of Bernard's lieutenants with 23 men, negotiated the surrendered of the sheep-eaters – 51 in all. The Indians had been worn out physically and psychologically by their pursuers.

WILDLIFE

The river provides outstanding fishing. Salmon, steelhead, cutthroat, rainbow, whitefish, and Dolly Varden are found here. Nearly one-third of the Chinook Salmon spawning nests (called “redds”) in the Salmon River drainage occur in the Middle Fork and its tributaries. The Chinook migrate from the Pacific Ocean up the Columbia River from March through July, spawning in the Middle Fork during August and September. After the young spend one to two years in fresh water, they descend to the ocean where they mature before returning to their ancestral waters to spawn and die. Steelhead, an ocean-going rainbow trout, migrate up the Salmon River during the fall and spring, and spawn in the Middle Fork and tributaries each spring.

The Middle Fork country abounds in game such as deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and bear. Because much of the rugged canyon is virtually impassable on foot or horseback, some hunters boat down the river. Other wildlife includes cougar, lynx, bobcat, coyote, fox, porcupine, badger, beaver, marten, mink, otter, muskrat, and skunk. Chukar partridge and Franklin, blue and ruffed grouse are also found here.



The Forest Service manages wildlife habitat on the National Forests: Bag limits and seasons are established by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Among the river's points of interest are the fish ladder at Dagger Falls, built to assist salmon in their migration; Sheepstealer Hot Springs, named for Sheepstealer Indians (mile 12.9); Whitie Cox's Camp and Grave – burial site of a prospector who was killed in 1954 by a falling rock while placer mining (mile 46.2); Hospital Bar, with its hot springs at the upper end of the campsite, was supposedly the spot where the wounded soldiers recovered (mile 52.1); Soldier's Monument at Soldier Bar Landing Field about 4 miles up Big Creek, marking the grave of Private Harry Eagan, the only soldier killed

during the Sheepstealer Campaign (mile 77.9); Veil Cave is a huge open-faced cavern carved from water and glaciers that hued out the canyon. Indian pictographs can be seen on the upper walls. Mountain sheep frequent this site. The view in and around the cave is worth the steep climb (mile 80.7); Parrott Diggings, left by Earl Parrott, a hermit prospector who gave up city life to seek his fortune along the Middle Fork (mile 86.2). Earl Parrott has two cabins, one located at the mouth of Nuggett Creek, and one placed about 1,000 vertical feet above the river cabin. He reaches his cliffside cabin by using a series of ladders.



GEOLOGY

The Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness occupies part of an extensive geological formation known as the Idaho Batholith. This formation, which is mainly granite, has been severely eroded, exposing underlying rock formations laid down during the Precambrian, Permian, Triassic, and Cretaceous geological periods.

Most recent volcanic activity (25 to 30 million years ago) resulted in the Casto formations along the Middle Fork of the Salmon River drainage.

SAFE FLOATBOATING

Floatboating down the Middle Fork is an experience full of adventure and thrills. Placid emerald-hued pools alternate with swift currents and boiling waters of dazzling white rapids.

The Middle Fork is not a place for the novice boater. Those unfamiliar with the river can get into dangerous water without warning. Persons lacking experience, equipment, and knowledge of the river should obtain the services of a licensed outfitter or guide.

Floatboating is especially hazardous during the spring highwater period, which is May through June. The road to Boundary Creek is not normally open until June 15 because of snow. Many early floaters fly into Indian Creek. The popular boating period is from July to September. Many start their trip at the road end at Boundary Creek. Later in the summer when the water is low, it is best to start float trips at one of the downstream landing fields. Current water conditions and forecasts may be obtained from the Middle Fork District Office located in Challis, Idaho, and referenced on the second page of this guide.

Most floating is done in large rubber rafts. More skilled boaters may use kayaks, McKenzies, dories, or drift boats. Other types of water craft are not recommended. U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets designed for river running are required for each person and should be worn at all times while on the river. Bedding and other equipment should be packed in water-resistant containers and tied securely to the boat. For safety reasons, two or more rafts are recommended.

First-aid equipment and knowledge is essential for each party. The Middle Fork canyon is rattlesnake habitat; therefore, knowledge of proper snakebite treatment is suggested. Patches of poison ivy can be found along the river bank.

A Forest Service patrol boat and kayak team are on the river intermittently throughout the season. The patrolmen carry radios for emergency purposes. In the event of an emergency on the river, communications or help can usually be obtained at the following locations:

- Boundary Creek Campground (mile 0)
- Pistol Creek Ranch (private) (mile 23.9)
- Indian Creek Guard Station F.S. (mile 24.7)
- Middle Fork Lodge (private) (mile 33.3)
- Little Creek Guard Station F.S. (mile 35.8)
- Simplot Ranch (private) (mile 49.3)
- Flying B Ranch (private) (mile 67.7)
- Cache Bar Launch and Take-Out (mile 99.7)
- Corn Creek Campground (mile 105)

AIR TRAVEL

Landing fields along the Middle Fork are minimally developed airstrips. Those planning to fly into the area should check with the Idaho Department of Aeronautics at Boise. Information on facilities is available in the "Idaho Airport Facilities Directory" and the "Idaho Aeronautical Chart." During the summer, flying should be confined to early morning or late evening. Flights into the area are recommended only for qualified pilots familiar with mountain flying. Flying accidents are not uncommon and usually occur as a result of inexperience and poor judgment.

Commercial flight services are available in Challis, Salmon, McCall, Boise, Cascade, and other Idaho towns. Information can be obtained by calling the District Ranger's office in Challis, Salmon, McCall, Boise, and Cascade. These offices are noted on the second page of this guide.

MINIMUM IMPACT CAMPING

Help us protect the beauty and naturalness of this unique wild environment. A few simple rules of self-conduct will ensure perpetuation of special wilderness features. The following are guidelines:

SANITATION

Human waste pack out is required within the Middle Fork River Corridor. An approved porta potty system must be utilized by all float groups on the river. You must be prepared to carry out all human waste to the provided dump site.

Pack out all nonburnable refuse such as cans, can tabs, bottles, and aluminium foil. Burying is not satisfactory. Try to leave the site cleaner than when you arrived. Cigarette butts thrown on the ground seem insignificant, but accumulate quickly and distract from the beauty of a campsite.

WILDFIRES

Even though the Middle Fork canyon is rocky, there is enough vegetation on the hillsides to carry disastrous fires. Trees, grasses, and brush become extremely dry during the summer. A fire, once started, can flash quickly up steep slopes. Fire control is extremely difficult because of the rough terrain and the remoteness of this back country. Tremendous expanse is required to suppress wildfires. We must also consider the disastrous effect on vegetation, soil, and scenery. Please, put your campfires completely out.

All boating parties on the Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild River are required to use fire pans, or liquid fuel stoves. All open fires must be contained in a metal fire pan to eliminate fire rings and prevent the spread of ash or charcoal on the beaches and camps.

FIRE PAN USE

1. Before the fire is built, place an inch layer of sand on the bottom of your fire pan. Elevate it on rocks if possible, to protect the soil and surrounding vegetation.
2. During the use of the fire, be very careful not to throw in any material that will not completely burn – aluminum foil, melon rinds, etc.
3. As you break camp, let the fire burn out as completely as possible.
4. Thoroughly dampen and cool the ashes in the fire pan. Use a minimum amount of water, but mix and stir the ashes and water completely.
5. Material is then emptied into a can, ammo box, or other metal container. The ashes are carried with you and placed in the fire pan at the next camp, eliminating the need for additional sand.

Using this method, campfire ashes and debris can be carried out of the Wild River area along with the rest of your garbage and trash. Do not dump ashes in the river, since they may be deposited back on the beaches.

OTHER FIRE RULES

1. Never cut and burn live material.
2. Keep your fire small.
3. Do not build a fire during windy conditions.
4. Never leave a fire unattended.

5. Drown your fire with water or mix with mineral soil. Stir it with a stick or shovel. A fire is never out until it feels cold.
6. Do not smoke while hiking or riding. Smoke only in a clear area. Extinguish smoking material completely.
7. Carry a shovel, bucket, and an ax. They may be required during fire season.

Because of the growing scarcity of firewood, we encourage the use of charcoal briquettes. They are effective for cooking and produce very little ash.

SOAP

Use no soap or shampoo in any stream, lake, or hot spring. If you wash or shampoo, locate yourself above the high water mark and make sure the water and soap will not drain back into the stream. Strain your dishwater over a large area well above the high water mark. Please help maintain the high water quality characteristic of the Middle Fork.

VEGETATION

Please do not cut or destroy any live vegetation. During the summer season, firewood becomes scarce at the campsites and you should plan on gathering firewood before you get to camp.

NATIVE AMERICAN AND HISTORIC SITES

Evidence of Native American and Euroamerican inhabitants are a significant part of the Middle Fork history and culture. Help protect the numerous archaeological and historical sites found within the corridor by observing the following camping protocols:

1. If possible, place your kitchen and tents on the lower sandy beaches; avoid placement in or adjacent to pithouse depressions located on the upper terraces.
2. Do not dig to level platforms or create rain trenches around your tents.
3. Use fire pans and dispose of all waste properly to avoid contamination of the sites.
4. Leave all artifacts intact and where you find them.
5. Do not touch the pictographs (rock art).

CAMPSITES

Campsites for boaters on the Middle Fork are assigned at the launch point. You may encounter backpackers or horseback campers who have entered the river corridor and are not aware of float boat assignments. If you should encounter them at your assigned camp, be friendly and courteous. Usually a compromise can be worked out. We have no way of assigning campsites to these people and they, too, have a right to enjoy the National Forest lands. Please be understanding and compatible.

GIANT HELLEBORINE – *EPIPACTUS GIGANTEA*

This member of the orchid family currently has State Threatened status.

Its flowers are irregular and typically orchid-like, about 3 cm broad with yellow-green sepals and coppery-brown petals.

This species is confined to moist sites bordering hot or cold springs, either in full sun or partial shade, along the Middle Fork Salmon River and several tributaries.

Because of its apparent restriction to primarily thermal springs, and overall rarity in the State, trampling and collecting by bathers has become a concern.

Please help preserve this beautiful plant for those who follow.



SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT LIST

- ☐ Coast Guard approved (III, V) life jacket
- ☐ One additional life jacket per 10 persons
- ☐ First-aid kit suitable for wilderness emergencies
- ☐ Self-rescue equipment applicable to wilderness river travel
- ☐ A minimum of one extra oar or paddle per boat
- ☐ Boat repair kit
- ☐ Throw bag
- ☐ Rowing gloves
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Tent and tarp
- ☐ Clothing for cold weather conditions (wool or polypropylene)
- ☐ Extra pair of shoes or boots
- ☐ Sun glasses, sunscreen, and apparel for intense sun conditions
- ☐ Water proof containers and bags
- ☐ High-energy snack foods
- ☐ Drinking water and water bottle
- ☐ Water filtering or treatment equipment
- ☐ Garbage containers or bags
- ☐ Gas fueled stove
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Matches
- ☐ An accessible day use portable toilet

NOTES



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EUROPEAN RAPID RATING SYSTEM

Each rapid shown on the map is rated one through six. The ratings indicate the difficulty of each rapid at a medium water level.

- | | | |
|------------|------------------|---|
| I | CLASS I | VERY EASY – small regular waves and riffles; few or no obstacles; little maneuvering required. |
| II | CLASS II | EASY – small waves with some eddies, low ledges, and slow rock gardens; some maneuvering required. |
| III | CLASS III | MEDIUM – numerous waves that are high and irregular; strong eddies; narrow, but clear passages that require expertise in maneuvering; scouting from the shore necessary. |
| IV | CLASS IV | DIFFICULT – long rapids with powerful, irregular waves, dangerous rocks, and boiling eddies; precise maneuvering and scouting from the shore imperative; take all possible safety precautions. |
| V | CLASS V | VERY DIFFICULT – long rapids with wild turbulence and extremely congested routes that require complex maneuvering; a danger to your life and boat and near the limits of navigation. |
| VI | CLASS VI | THE LIMITS OF NAVIGATION – rarely run; a definite hazard to your life. |

PHOTO CREDITS:

Brian Lee, Velvet Falls; Kevin Colburn, Marble Creek; Rachelle Wiebe, Boundary Creek; Paul Lange, Tappan Falls; Anthony Smith, Dagger Falls; Tim Mason, Pistol Creek; Alice Hodges, Cramer Creek.



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